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VOLUME 1

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TRANSITION
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AFRO — AMERICAN STUDIES

VOLUME I

NUMBER 1

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TRANSITION

THE STAFF WOULD LIKE
TO THANK
THOMAS TERRELL
LEE COOK
ROY McKAY
MICHELLE CALHOUN
FOR
THEIR ASSISTANCE

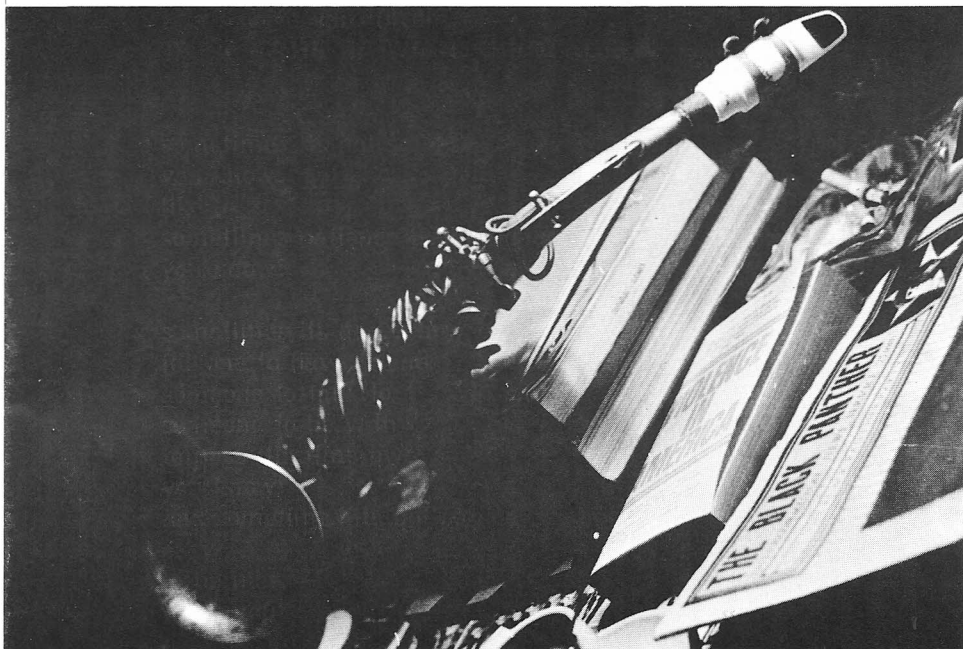
TRANSITION

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H83t



For the "Believers":

TRANSITIONS IN SOUND

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

St. John 1:4-6

Transitions from primal Blue Trane through Eastern rhythms and African Brass towards ascending Cosmic Manifestations...

Transitions from "harmonic sheets of sound" through modular harmony towards ever expanding improvisational dimensions...

Circular transitions revolving around love, passion and turmoil - gyrated by feeling, rhythm and spirituality - encompassing a perpetual gyration in the Black circle of sound.

And his name was John...

W. C. Blount, III
January, 1972

BLACK MUSICIANS

Listen ... to the Brotherman, blow his Horn ... Listen to the Sisterlady, sing her song.

Our ... history ... mood ... desire, they convey. to ease the Burden, break the bond, resist Non-spirituality ... increase Knowledge of Self.

The ordeals ... of nights. Tribulations ... of day. Smell ... of burying Crosses ... sounds of suppression ... of Love, lost ... and Love, desired ... Loneliness, Injustice, Frustration. Brotherman ... blow your Horn! Trumpet the sounds of Awareness ... A-wakening ... U-nity ... and, Free-dom.

Sisterlady ... sing your song! Wail the lyrics of Resist-ance ... Knowledge, of Self ... Rejuve-nation of Pride, and ... Purpose.

Do it ... y'all! ... make your music ... together. Formulate ... for us, direction ... purpose ... time ... happenstance.

Create ... elements, that will rally ... us ... beckon ... the way ... send, us ... without fear ... but ... with song. Sing the songs ... that will heal our ... wounds ... play the music that will flame our ... desires ... to Be ... Free.

When we hunt ... the hunter ... who wounded the Proud Bird ... us ... Afric-Us ... Be ... with Us ... Make Us, Strong ... with your Chords. And in the final ... analysis ... Brotherman ... Sisterlady. You will Create ... the Music that will ... Create a new ... Us.

A. Hamisi Mujahid



A MEMORY

slowly
going slowly
moving quickly
darkly
through the green forests,
little brown faces
smiling
grinning
crying
missing homes and friends
faced to face the
reality of the natural
order of life
and time
watching the sun go up
and go down
rising
and setting
dawn and
dusk
singing songs
that feel joy
that sound joy

*that contradict their
inner-city death sentences.*



*little young gangsters
waiting for free candy and free love
little hoodlems
forgetting for a short while
the torture of living
in an overcrowded playground,
trying to sleep with night sounds lulling them
feeling the security
of big brothers
that will go out of their
very important lives,
eating breakfast, lunch and dinner together*

*a new concept:
passing bread and butter
a new experience:
saying grace for the first time in their lives*

*little boys playing drums
of good and bad memories
playing games
of friendship and understanding
brown faces black faces speckled faces blue faces
young and warm
creeping
moving
through
the eternity
of a memory.*

*a memory
Copyright 1971 by debbie wood*

as children
we urinated in the same hallways
and copulated on the same rat invested stairways
while momma was cooking in the same man's kitchen
and poppa was drinking in his bar
and now
as responsible adults
we consume wine on the same riot torn corners
and shoot his drugs into the same arm.

DJ

like children we mount the plastic ponies of life
riding round and round and round
searching for some ism to believe in
some belief to perpetuate
some art to master
some drug to make us forget
and as the world slows to a stop
we dismount and realize we've been going in circles
and circles are circles are circles
and never go anywhere

DJ

and there will be no new nation
only another generation
birthed by accident
of this generation
and after them
more accidents
and generations after generation
of the same.
and no
there will be no new nation
only kings and queens of the mind
our children
preplanned
lords and ladies
of the same.
for the new nation
lies
drying dying
white and crusty
on our sheets
on our thighs
and in the bag
and there will be more destruction
of the same.



DJ

ain't no poem No. 1

i remember
back in '68 when i had to
walk from house to house with no money
or food
and a kind old sister
took me in for three days
in fluvanna county virginia
now perhaps she'd eye me suspiciously
and close the door in my face
when the old fear and suspect their young
is it nationhood we're headed for?

the corner
where we'd stand after school has lost its
innocence as have many of us and
tho they still stand, now it's more a desperate waiting
for a pick-up that'll come too soon
the ice-cream store is long gone and in its place
now is a poolroom. the brothers and sisters who
line its walls and lean on its tables keep up no idle chatter
as we did. instead there is a deathly silence even when they speak. --
eyes peering from underneath hats or
overtop of sunshades -
what is it they wait and look for
the drugstore is still there. people still crowd in after church on sunday but it
closes before dusk each night and the streets become dark from no streetlights
(best for unsee-ing eyes)
this is not a poem but a eulogy, a challenge?

how
do you explain to someone who doesn't already know
that it is our young nation he is killing?
that each time they smoke or snort or mainline it is our oppressor they inject into
the lifeline of our struggle - as has happened so often in the past.

'a people ignorant of their history are doomed to repeat it' - how do you explain to
someone who doesn't already know?
and those of us who do
are we not convinced of the seriousness?
we need only think of how many folks we went to school with who are strung out.
or dead. we only need think of 8-yr olds O-D ing. just watch the "block" in your
community. look. and see.

how many
how young
how eagerly they come.
as our own meetings go unattended.
and we begin to teach ourselves
the things we already know to avoid facing them.
"them niggahs is crazy"
"they'll nevah kill me for saying somethin to em"
"shit.. ain't no hope for them niggahs"

but
them niggahs is us
is our nation
dying

it is our oppressor who so skillfully murders our people as they get high and
feelgood it is we who are not dealing with it as the lifedeath now-never
everythingnothing problem that it is

too busy
with meeting sand-reading-and
nation-bldg

ain't no poem no. 2

ain't no white folks re-habit-litation center goin' to get our people off dope so's the
better to struggle against them

michelle winston



ANDREW

(A play in Remembrance)

Clay Goss

Copyright©1969 by Clay Goss

ANDREW
(A Play In Remembrance)

CHARACTERS:

PAUL
BILLY
ANDREW

The characters are 3 Black dudes between 18 and 20 living in the North Philly slums. These brothers act very hip. They are bad motherfuckers not to be messed with at all. They are not to be dressed sloppy or dirty but casually clean (as in very clean dude).

SETTING:

North Philadelphia at Night. A Street Sign (Bigger than life) representing the corner of 29th and Ridge Ave. PAUL is on stage.

PAUL

This ain't no play, man. I'm tryin' to find my main man, Andrew. The cat was here about a second or so ago. Hey Andrew? Where you at, man? No shit, man, where you at? Come on out, Jack. I ain't gon move on you again. Where you at man?

BILLY

(entering) What's happenin, Dude!

PAUL

You seen Andrew, Man?

BILLY

Naw, Man, but I got some dynamite grass and

PAUL

.....This ain't no play, Man ... You seen Andrew or What?

BILLY

Yeah, I I seen the dude, Man but not today I mean I seen the cat a second or so ago.

PAUL

You've seen the cat, Man?

BILLY

Naw, not really, man but Yeah if you can dig me ... I mean maybe if we could sit down somewhere and rap or

PAUL

Look Man, I said this ain't no joke.

BILLY

I ain't joking man, I got some grass and bananapaper now ...

PAUL

Now is over, Man. You know that. Things ain't never gonna be like they was.

BILLY

All we gotta do is talk, Man. Just talk that's all. I ain't askin' no favors, Paul.

PAUL

I ain't asking no favors either, Billy, I'm asking you have you seen my man, Andrew?

BILLY

I said about a second or so ago, Remember?

PAUL

Remember What, Man?

BILLY

Remember when we was kids and belonged to troop 465 down in the church basement? 'Member that time when me and you and and and

BILLY

Andrew!

BILLY

Yeah... Yeah, Andrew, Remember when we all got left behind on that camping trip? We was too young to dig on what was comin' down then.

PAUL

I I don't understand what's coming down now, man. The cat was here just a second ago. Right Here. Standin right here in front of me, rapping.

BILLY

Yeah, the cat **could** Rap his ass off. I really hated havin to mess with the dude. . . .

PAUL

What? What you say, Man?

BILLY

You heard me, Paul, man. You remember what we had to put down on the cat. He wasn't from the neighborhood anymore you know. He wasn't part of the group, Man. Plus he was in the Zulu Nation.

PAUL

The Zulu NA Man we never even got **questioned** even for what came down on the dude. Before he moved he used to live right next door to me.

BILLY

I spotted Andy walkin' down the street. He was alright with me, but you remember how it was I I said what's your name, Brotherman

PAUL

We was all laughing too.

BILLY

Even Andy. I said Where you from **BROTHERMAN?**

PAUL

He was comin to see my sister.

BILLY

I I said Where you **GOIN, BROTHERMAN?** And he said

ANDREW

(entering) Yawl know who I am, Andy! I just moved from around here a second ago. What's happenin'?

BILLY

You, BROTHERMAN, here you gon ZULU NATION.

ANDREW

Yea, I gotta live man, you know.

PAUL

You know something else, man.

ANDREW

What's that Paul?

PAUL

It ain't that easy to jam my sister, man.

ANDREW

What you talkin' bout, Paul, Man? This is **ME**, Andy man. I use to live next door, Jack. Your sister's my woman.

BILLY

Where you from, **BROTHER MAN?**

ANDREW

I'm from here, Yawl know that.

PAUL

I don't know **nothin'** man.

BILLY

Where you from **BROTHER MAN?**

ANDREW

No Where then.

BILLY

WHAT?

ANDREW

I said **NO** Where then.

PAUL

Uh huh, well **No' Where then** is getting stronger, man.

ANDREW

Look here, yawl, I ain't got no time.....

BILLY

YOU right man, You ain't got **No** time. No time unless you do some mean rapping.

ANDREW

About what?

PAUL

About **When**.

ANDREW

When What?

BILLY

When you was **really**, living.

ANDREW

I was born next door to Paul down here in the projects. And I knew when my family moved from here that I was never gonna be able to come back.

PAUL

But you're here, Andy, man. You right back here with us.

BILLY

You remember **US**, man, Or do you just remember jaming Paul's sister, huh?
You remember **US**?

ANDREW

Yes, Billy, you know I remember, yawl. I used to be one of yawl.

BILLY

You used to be living, Jack.

ANDREW

And when I was I used to love you cats.

PAUL

And when you was you belonged to the ZULU NATION.

ANDREW

And when I was I used to party strong with you cats.

BILLY

And when you was, you moved to another neighborhood.

ANDREW

And when I was I used to gang war hard with you cats.

PAUL

And when you was you made the mistake of coming on back.

ANDREW

And when I was I use to drink wine on the corner with you cats.

BILLY

And when you was you use to hate the ZULU NATION.

ANDREW

And when I was I use to love all you cats in the projects.

PAUL

And when you was We had to kill you.

BILLY

It was like a thing you know. A thing that had to be done you know. Like even now I remember how you looked and how you fought but but DAMN I mean

ANDREW

Like it was kinda funny before yawl killed me cause we had been steady rapping. And after I died shit, way after I died I wasn't even mad at yawl.

PAUL

We was all laughing too.

ANDREW

I knew yawl was gonna ice me, man. I couldn't believe it you understand. But I knew.

BILLY

I knew too, man. And we did too. Shot the shit out him. Knocked him back bout two sidewalk squares.

PAUL

Even Andy was laughing.

ANDREW

Cause the shit was funny. It was really some funny shit. You kept asking me them questions. I knew I couldn't win.

PAUL

Naw, man you could have won. You could have won big too, man. Real big.

BILLY

We had the WINE ready to celebrate man, Ice Cole 'Ripple' WINE. We was all hoping you'd come through.

ANDREW

Naw I couldn't have Won. Them questions was getting to me I

PAUL

The thing wasn't even to Win man. It It was to remember, see. That's where you blew your cool, man. In Remembering.

ANDREW

In Remembering. Now wait a minute. I remembered. I did remember man, Everything you asked me I had an answer.

BILLY

YEAH, you had the right answers too.

PAUL

CEPT they was so right they was wrong.

ANDREW

Wait a minute now. So right they was wrong. Where yawl comin' from, my whole rap was very right. Might of fact it was mean.

PAUL AND BILLY

NAW MAN!! NAW MAN!! NAW MAN!! NAW MAN!!

ANDREW

It was right man. I know it was. Yawl had just made up your minds to off me anyway. You know I could dig it. I died anyway!

PAUL AND BILLY

NAW MAN! You wrong Andy. Naw Man!

ANDREW

Wrong. I was right. Ask me them questions again. Shit, I ain't got nothin to lose.

PAUL

You ain't got nothing to gain either, man.

ANDREW

I don't know about that. Go head and ask me them questions again.

BILLY

Where you from Brother Man?

ANDREW

Richard Allen Projects across the bridge from Strawberry Mansion.

BILLY

Where you from Brother Man?

ANDREW

From right down here with yawl. Next to my main man, Paul.

BILLY

Where you from Brother Man?

ANDREW

From From I was born in Charleston, South Carolina in 1949 and my Great Great Grandpop was a slave who spoke Fluent **IBO**.

PAUL

SO! SO

BILLY

Ibo? Man, where you comin from, Brother man?

ANDREW

From another neighborhood. Another bag. Another time, Man, when niggers was talking Yoruba up in the Hills.

PAUL

Cool it, Andy man, This ain't no play, Jack.

ANDREW

I know man, But dig on this performance. Like Like I was from another neighborhood and I had to play the part cause

BILLY

Cause we weren't playing, Andy, Where were you goin Brotherman?

ANDREW

I I was goin to die and I knew it so I forgot about Paul's younger sister and how much she dug me. I forgot about all you niggers and the boss times we had had together. I started rememberin.

BILLY

Remembering what man. You still got shot.

ANDREW

Remembering how you cats danced and sang and how you cats walked down the street and stood on the block and messed with the woman and

PAUL

Like you was messing with my sister, huh?

ANDREW

Naw, Paul you know your sister had my nose wide open.

BILLY

Look man, the shit is too long already. By now you was long dead.

ANDREW

Maybe so Billy, but I had remembered everything we had done.

PAUL

Dance like we use to dance Brotherman.

(ANDREW does the Philly Dog, African Twist, and Popcorn,
PAUL and BILLY join in.)

PAUL

Sing like we use to sing, Brotherman.

(ANDREW sings "There was a Time" by James Brown, PAUL
and Billy join in laughing screaming the imitation of the in-
struments with their voices.)

PAUL

Walk down the street like we use to walk, Brotherman.

(ANDREW soul struts.)

BILLY

Mess with the Women, Brotherman.

ANDREW

Hey Momma, you sure do look good To me. UMM NMM you really
P.H.A.T. Fat for days. (They all laugh together--)

BILLY

(Still laughing) Andsome nights alone I used to get to crying thinking about what went down. CauseCause you was really hip and me and Paul never got busted or even questioned about the killing.

PAUL

(Still laughing) And my sister man, she came up to my room one night and ask me did I know who killed you. And I thought about the shit and didn't really know Didn't even know why it happened at all except it had to happen I told her that I'd find out through the grapevine for her but I never did.

ANDREW

I never did either understand what I didn't remember I seemed to me that I remembered everything like it was I mean I ain't making no excuse cause the language I was talking was stone IBO and yawl was rapping some mean YORUBA AND

PAUL

And all that night my sister was asking everybody, Have you seen Andrew? "He said he'd be over in about an hour from when he called."

ANDREW

I even remember tellin' her that. And getting on the bus to make it on over there chained and silent.

BILLY

I spotted you gettin off the bus and I told Paul to check you out. We was just joking at first but when you.....

ANDREW

I looked in both your eyes and dug on what was coming down. And somewhere I dug we was once brothers. Friends.

BILLY

We was just joking at first but when you started talking that that

ANDREW

Yea, that That What?

PAUL

When you started rapping that GODDAMNED STUPID Ass YORUBA that the Niggers talk up your neighborhood I mean we had to off you and man cause

BILLY

Cause really we could understand what you was saying but we didn't know where you was coming from or maybe we knew where you **was coming from** and **was goin**.

ANDREW

And I belonged to the ZULU Nation on the other side of time and I was going to see Paul's sister and my name was Andrew.

PAUL

And your name **had been Andrew** but your talking said you didn't remember your friends, man Cause my name was still Billy and Paul's name was still Paul and this neighborhood was still this neighborhood and all you had (Billy and Paul hit hands) to do was **hit our hands** and keep on getting up like you would have done before.

BILLY

But naw, man you had to mess with us and —

ANDREW

Mess with yawl, man I came over to see Paul's sister. How was I messing with yawl!

BILLY

Cause if you had really remembered who we was. Really remembered **what we was** and where **you** was. And if how you had been part of that (they hit hands again) was you would of just hit our hands and went on over to Paul's house.

PAUL

You was out of your territory man. By messing with us. Talking to us you **was** really out of your territory man! You was from the ZULU NATION man not the Richard Allen Projects anymore, you understand.

BILLY

We had to off you for trespassing against us Andy, man.

ANDREW

And after I died man, I ... I learned to love yawl too. I looked on either side of the city and really felt that we was really something once before the long trip over. Like it was funny as SHIT WHILE WE WERE TALKING. And after I died I was never really mad. NotNot once I just didn't understand us crowded close together in that project not knowing what each other was saying like sorry Africans on a slave ship chained and silent during the long trip overfluent IBO.

PAUL AND BILLY

SO!

ANDREW

Fluent Yoruba!

PAUL AND BILLY

SO!

ANDREW

AND I DIED (ANDREW walks off stage puzzled, lack of understanding).

PAUL

You've seen Andrew?

BILLY

Yeah, not really I mean if you can Dig on me.

PAUL

You've Seen the dude man?

BILLY

Maybe if we could go somewhere and sit down like I got some mean reefer and some banana paper, you can roll if you want to, now.

PAUL

Now is over, man. You know that. Things ain't never gonna be like they was causecause (turns to audience) and this ain't no play, man.

curtain

Clay Goss



I've watched
 you
with the meticulousness
 that a
woman views her
 man
and the suddness
 of my
thoughts captured the
 essence
of your movements,
 superb.
Yet, it was
 your eyes
that captivated my
 attention,
beheld me in
 a trance
so warm and
 trusting
in so much that
 I
sought time to
 linger there
where upon it seemed
 an eternity
passed, while yet,
 it
was only a
 moment,
a moment to
 smile
and grow happy
 with the
 tenderness
of you
 and yes you are
tender
 in your ways
encumbered
 within the
outskirts
 of my world
subtly gliding
 into your
your atmosphere

surrounding
yourself with your
ideas.
And everytime I
managed
to catch your
eyes,
I felt the
promise
of
Piscean
Love.

A.A.

Afraid

As you stood
there staring
into nothingness,
I wanted to ask
who she was
but
I was afraid
you would answer,
"my woman"

A.A.

Al Ajaguna Khalil

We peered the sky
 real late
lurking at the water currents
the sky was cloud filled
 no stars
until we decided we would be
 the things which would
glow.

Amma-Serwaa Khalil

When the stars fall and the sun crashes
 upon the heads of the nation not risen
aborted by the intolerable
love desire of the blk man
 for the wench
Tremble and run and Rush

 and slash throats with daggar tongues
 and sacrifice in vain
It would have been our fault
Our beauty could not wash away the false that still breathes
We followed the tricks of the wench
 the warriors fell from our wombs
 & nursed from her breasts
We rumbled in the corners which mirrored the answer
lost the hopes, flung our children into the cans
 spilled them prematurely
 onto the continent
And the wench devoured all young males,

Amma Serwas Khalil

(carlotta said)

i have been having something like daydreams
but not daydreams cause i'm wide awake
and i be seeing myself turned backwards you know
and i can't see my face but i know it's me you know what i mean?
and my arms are reaching out you know man
i mean i'm really trying to reach something
any my arms they be turnin into elastic cause i'm reachin so hard man and you
know
like all these people keep passin me
walking right by me
and nobody will stop you know.
hey man
like that's really fucked up isn't it?
that's really fucked up man.

wed. 3-17-71
apw

to a true howard brother
TO A TRUE HOWARD BROTHER

sometimes its not so easy
you know
like a
sometimes patience is the virtue
you know?

sometimes its necessary
for one to have friends
someone to talk to
someone to be with
to pass the time away
you know?
and sometimes its not so
easy
to be nice
when you're a
negative force

but just remember patience is
the virtue
you know
and a
by the way
women are **healthy** activity
I suggest you start making friends instead
of enemys
or you'll
end up a faggot

you know?

to a true howard brother
TO A TRUE HOWARD BROTHER
Copyright ©1971
by debbie wood



Howard

Between
the
vanishing
Negro
&
the
invisible
black man

I
look
for
change

E. Ethelbert Miller